

Contributions

THE PASTOR AND HIS STUDIES

Z. T. LIVENGOD

Part I

"And he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and pastors as teachers for the perfecting of the saints." Eph. 4: 11. The word pastor is sometimes translated shepherd and to us the latter would carry with it more plainness of meaning. The word in the original means, to feed, to guide, to keep, to lull, to soothe.

1. The pastor ought to be called of God, just as the successful farmer is called of God, or the mechanic or the manufacturer or inventor or teacher or any legitimate and divine calling. I mean to say that there ought to be a divine fitness for the calling of pastor. The call may come direct from the Holy Ghost or from the church or from the individual.

Whatever may be the instrument through which the call comes, *God* must do the sealing and sanctioning. It must not be forgotten that the labor to be wrought is God's work and must be done with his approbation and direction.

2. To be successful the pastor must be a good man. To be of even doubtful character, will be a constant annoyance and influence against his divinely commissioned work. Goodness, purity, holiness, knowledge and wisdom are all elements that will work in favor with the labors of the real pastor. The Holy Spirit can utilize a *holy pastor* much more successfully than he can the *intellectual one*. God works through *goodness* more readily and successfully than through *smartness*. Paul says, "Knowledge puffeth up but charity edifies or builds up." The pastor needs to be broad and strong as a man, well versed in the Old and New Testament, in history, an excellent student of human nature, and obedient to the gospel of Jesus Christ, and *filled with the Holy Ghost*. Success in our work as pastors, depends largely upon our characters. For it is very difficult to produce a good character without a fair degree of intelligence. Knowledge and goodness ought to go together. But of the two, we must not fail to fully understand that the greatest of all is *charity*.

Many of the churches have suffered and become weak and sickly and some have fallen asleep, because of some unevenly balanced pastor, one who was intellectual and lacked spirituality, pastors who cared more for the fleece than they did for the sheep. Jesus was the ideal Shepherd. His commission came from the Father and it was the feeding, the guiding, the keeping and the comforting of the sheep. In the same way the pastor now must in some way feel that his

call is from God, not to accumulate earthly riches, but to care for the sheep. Right there is a grave and awful evil in some churches in calling a pastor. They too frequently call a pastor just to have a change, or to have some one who will not administer such careful and rigid discipline, or perhaps to more pleasantly tickle and amuse and entertain the people. Churches, *you* do much of the calling of pastors. Are you qualified to call? Do you call with the proper motive? Do you call as God wants you to? Is your call in accord with the word and the Holy Ghost? Oh! that there might be less trifling with the divine office, and that pastors and churches would more earnestly and truly follow the gospel instructions.

Then again I am persuaded to say that I fail to find any gospel precedent or teaching that will justify pastor to hire a pastor for six months or one year, or even two years. To me it seems that the gospel and good sense teach and a Christian spirit should dictate when there ought to be a change, and who ought to be the successor. The retiring pastor, the official board (or the pastor's assistants) and the church all guided by the Holy Ghost must do the work. The pastor's authority should not be rejected so long as he manifests God's spirit, and the church ought to be wise and able to discriminate between the spirit of God and the spirit of the world.

Let us notice some of his qualifications as shepherd or pastor. He is caring for and helping men and women. Helping them to stand against the temptations, snares and wiles of sin. Helping them to be good men and women, and even gathering in more sheep into the fold.

The pastor ought to know the nature, disposition, needs and possibilities of the sheep. He must know the proper food to give them or the right kind of pasture to lead them into, and the waters they may be led to. For how can one feed sheep properly who knows not what kind of food they eat, and where he may obtain it, or where the still waters flow? Then how can the pastor *feed, guide* and safely keep, and lull, and save men, and women, and children he knows nothing about? Jesus says, "My sheep know my voice"—"I know my sheep"—"and am known of mine." John 10: 14. The good shepherd, the pastor, can tell the sick sheep from the well one; he can tell the stubborn one from the obedient one; he can tell the good feeder from the one who must live on dainties, or break through the fence or ranks and wander among wolves, on forbidden pastures. He can tell a lamb from a sheep. He is *watchful* over his flock of sheep, and can tell a wolf when he sees one, and wherever he sees one or a wolf in sheep's clothing. The good shepherd loves his sheep, not for the fleece or wool he may

get, but loves the sheep for their own sake. He loves them to save them and keep them. The shepherd can tell the naughty sheep from the one that is obedient; and the naughty little sheep the mean, haughty, little church member who wanders far, far away up into the mountains and is lost, the true pastor still loves, and goes out, and seeks the naughty little one, and brings it back into the fold.

The true pastor is willing to lay down his life for his members. Jesus did it; he is our example, our pattern. This is a hard saying. Who can receive it?

The pastor is a thoroughly prepared man for his work; he knows the work he is to do, and he knows how to perform that labor. *God* has given him the work to do, and the *Holy Spirit* constantly teaches him *how* to do that work successfully. He never loses sight of his work, *the members*, his sheep; not for his sake, but for their sakes. He never loses sight of the Holy Ghost who has made him overseer of the church which Jesus bought with his own precious blood.

THE SOCIAL LAW OF SERVICE

MRS. CLARA W. MILLER

Voltaire said, "Society is as ancient as the world." Men must live among men. Men must influence men. After the Son of God revealed himself, his immediate work was to enlist men in his enterprise, to rally them into a company or society, for the carrying out of his plans. The name by which this society was known was the kingdom of God. Its machinery is purely social. It acts not by fiat but by friendship. "The kingdom of God is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened." As the program of his society Christ appropriated to himself that venerable fragment from Isaiah.

To Preach Good Tidings unto the Meek.

To Bind up the Broken-Hearted.

To Proclaim Liberty to the Captives and the Opening of the Prison to them that are Bound.

To Proclaim the Acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God

To Comfort all that Mourn.

To Appoint unto them that Mourn in Zion, to give unto them Beauty of Ashes, the Oil of Joy for Mourning, the Garment of Praise for the Spirit of Heaviness.

"Service ever exalts its object, vaunts not itself, but speaks in self-dispraise." The social law of service is altruistic—the greatest word of ethics—living and doing for others.

"Gladness be with thee, helper of the world!" We do not know what ripples of healing are set in motion when we simply smile on one another. The world wants nothing so much as sunny people, and the old are hungrier for love than for bread, and the oil of joy is very cheap, and if you can help the poor on with the garment of praise, it will be